

PS 345: Southeast Asian Politics

Winter 2020

Class meeting hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3:20 pm in 101 LLCS

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Course Description: This course surveys three major themes in Southeast Asian politics, including 1) the formation of the modern states that were accompanied by violent conflicts; 2) the processes and causes of political transformations; and 3) identity politics involving ethnicities and religions. Through these three themes, students are expected to be critically informed of the main patterns of political development in Southeast Asia, and to be able to apply political science theories to analyze particular issues facing the region today.

This course satisfies Group 2 (social sciences) and International Culture requirements.

Evaluation: Grades will be based on attendance (5%), engagement (5%), a midterm (30%), a term paper (30%), and a final exam (30%).

- Students are required to attend all sessions and read course materials carefully before class. Please give 24 hours advance notice or doctor's letter for excused absence. No other extensions will be excused.
- Engagement (asking questions and offering comments in class) is strongly encouraged and counts for 5% of the total grade. Use of laptops is allowed in class only for taking note, not for accessing the Internet. Cell phone and tablet use is forbidden except in emergency case with advance notice provided to instructor.

Exams: Midterm and final exams are in 75-minute-long, in-class, closed-book format. They include short-essay questions designed to test (1) students' understanding of reading and viewing materials and lectures, and (2) their ability to make clear, informed and convincing arguments. Bring two green books (available at Duck Store).

Term Paper: Students are required to write a term paper that follows the guidelines below.

Length: 8 pages double-space (excluding cover page and bibliography).

Sources: Students are not required to use information and materials from outside the course materials for writing their paper. Citations are required for anything other than basic facts. In-text citations are sufficient: for example, (Beeson 2009, 32-33).

Topic: Based on what you know about theories of democratization and the history and economic and political conditions of Southeast Asian countries from the textbooks and other readings assigned for this class, make the case for one country in this region you think having

the best chance to become a functioning or stable democracy. The paper must include (1) an analysis of historical, economic and political conditions in the country to show why it has a **good** chance to become a functioning or stable democracy (make sure you discuss the kinds of social, economic and political changes that might happen in that country that would improve its chance to become such a democracy); (2) a comparison of that country to two others in the region to demonstrate that the country you pick has the **best** chance.

Outline: A one-page outline is due either in class or by email to the GTF by **2 pm on Wednesday, February 12**. In this outline, you should state (tentatively) which 3 countries you have selected; which is perhaps the country with the highest democratic quality and why; and whether you expect any changes in each country toward democratization. You will find the country chapters in the Dayley and Neher's book especially useful for this purpose. We will send back comments on your outline if we think they can be helpful.

Due: The paper is **due in class on Monday, March 2 and on canvas by 2 pm on same day**. No emailed or late paper accepted.

Grading criteria: (1) understanding of reading materials and lectures; (2) ability to make clear, informed and convincing arguments; (3) ability to organize materials and arguments into a coherent essay; and (4) ability to deploy theories and cases from the readings to support their arguments.

Cheating or plagiarism: will result in failing the class and in most cases will be reported to the University.

Course Materials

Two books are required—both are available at the Duckstore and on reserve in the Knight Library:

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 2013).
- Robert Dayley and Clark Neher, *Southeast Asia in the new international era* (Westview, 2013), 6th edition (7th edition is available but more expensive and not required).

All other readings are available under "FILE" on canvas. "Video resources," if not watched in class, are for home entertainment and learning. Tests require only information from documentaries watched in class.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Session 1 (Jan. 6): **Overview and introduction to SE Asia as a region**

- Dayley, *Southeast Asia in the new international era*, 1-25 (Introduction chapter).

- VIDEO RESOURCES: For a good introduction to life in the countries along the Mekong River (Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam), watch at home: “Mekong: The River of Nine Dragons” (2018) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnnFMv9GCH4>
- On the history of monarchy in Thailand, see: “Soul of a Nation: The Royal Family of Thailand” (BBC 1979, 1 hour 55 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y263zmpfziY>
- On China’s new approach to regional collaboration (some may say domination) see: “How is China’s New Silk Road is Transforming Vietnam and Laos,” (Mediacorp 2018, 47 minutes, one in the series involving many other countries) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2mUa8VavDc>

I. NATIONALISM, COMMUNISM, REVOLUTION & GENOCIDE

Session 2 (Jan. 8): **Colonialism and the rise of nationalism**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia*, 1-17.
- *Sukarno: An autobiography as told to Cindy Adams* (Bobbs-Merrill 1965), 22-50.
- VIDEO RESOURCE: For a visual sense of life in Indonesia in the 1950s, watch at home: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8kgGJC0Ljw> “Letter from Indonesia,” Churchill-Wexler Productions, 1955 (length: 15 minutes)

WEEK 2

Session 3 (Jan. 13): **Nationalism, communism, Islam**

- *Sukarno: An autobiography as told to Cindy Adams* (Bobbs-Merrill 1965), 61-77.
- Sukarno, “The Promise of a Brightly Beckoning (1930), Mohammad Hatta, “Colonial Society and the Ideals of Social Democracy (1956),” and Sukarno, “The Pantja Sila (1945),” in Feith and Castles, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking, 1945-1965* (Cornell, 1970), 29-49.
- D. N. Aidit, “A Semifeudal and Semicolonial Society (1957)” and “Indonesia’s Class Structure (1957),” in Feith and Castles, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking, 1945-1965* (Cornell, 1970), 247-257.

Session 4 (Jan. 15): **Revolutions & the Cambodian Revolution**

- Jack Goldstone, “Rethinking Revolution: Integrating Origins, Processes and Outcomes,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 29:1 (2009), 18-32.
- Karl Jackson, “The Ideology of Total Revolution,” in Karl Jackson, ed. *Cambodia: Rendezvous with Death* (Princeton, 1989), 37-78.
- Watch in class from minute 22 to 38: Mekong: The River of Nine Dragons” (2018) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnnFMv9GCH4>

WEEK 3

January 20: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – no class**

Session 5 (Jan. 22): **Revolutionary Violence and Genocide**

- Francois Ponchaud, "Social Change in the Vortex of Revolution," in Karl Jackson, ed. *Cambodia: Rendezvous with Death* (Princeton, 1989), 151-178.
- Watch in class: *S-21 The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* (First Run/Icarus Films 2003), 1 hour 40 minutes.

WEEK 4

Session 6 (Jan. 27): **Genocide and aftermath in Cambodia**

- Don Beachler, "The Quest for Justice in Cambodia: Power, Politics, and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 8:2 (2014).
- Finish watching documentary: *S-21 The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*.

II. POLITICAL CHANGES AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Session 7 (Jan. 29): **Overview and trajectories**

- Jacques Bertrand, "Understanding Political Change in Southeast Asia," in Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 2013), 17-30.
- Alex Chang et al., "Southeast Asia: Sources of Regime Support," *Journal of Democracy* 24: 2 (2013), 150-164.

WEEK 5

Session 8 (Feb. 3): **Malaysia & Singapore**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia*, 92-120.
- Chua Beng Huat and Kwok Kian-Woon, "Social Pluralism in Singapore," in Robert Hefner, ed. *The Politics of Multiculturalism* (Hawaii, 2001), 86-118.
- Watch in class: "Singapore: The House That Lee Built," (Al Jazeera 2018, 25 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c27vAhUJQdc>
- VIDEO RESOURCE: On corruption in Malaysia, watch at home: "Najib Walks Out of Al Jazeera Interview," (Al Jazeera, 2018, 25 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNM5WmY6t5M>

Session 9 (Feb. 5): **FIRST MIDTERM** (covering materials on nationalism, communism, revolution, and genocide)

WEEK 6

Session 10 (Feb. 10): **Indonesia and Philippines**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia*, 31-64, 71-91.
- Watch in class: Indonesia's President Joko Widodo interviewed by BBC News (2016, 15 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnrX68k-EyI>
- Salvador Regilme, "Why Asia's Oldest Democracy Is Bound to Fail," in *Journal of Developing Societies* 32: 3 (2016), 230-245.
- Julio Teehankee, "Weak State, Strong Presidents: Situating the Duterte Presidency in Philippine Political Time," *Journal of Developing Societies* 32:3 (2016), 293-321
- Watch in class: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/on-the-presidents-orders/> (55 minutes)

- VIDEO RESOURCE: Watch at home: "Indonesia's Showdown: Jokowi vs. Prabowo" (SBS Dateline, July 2014, 15 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5cJqB6nT0s>

Session 11 (Feb. 12): **Thailand**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia*, 121-139.
- Daniel Unger & Chandra Mahakanjana, "Thailand's Elusive Democracy," in Unger and Mahakanjana, eds. *Thai Politics: Between Democracy and Its Discontents* (Lynne Rienner, 2016), 195-220.
- **One-page outline due either in class or by email to Professor Vu by 2 pm**

WEEK 7

Session 12 (Feb. 17): **Myanmar**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 2013), 190-208.
- Lee Jones, "Explaining Myanmar's Transition: The Periphery Is Central," *Democratization* 21: 5 (2014), 780-802.

Session 13 (Feb. 19): **Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia**

- Jacques Bertrand, *Political Change in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 2013), 141-189.
- Jason Morris-Jung, "Vietnam's Online Petition Movement," *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2015, 402-415.
- DJH Blake, "Recalling Hydraulic Despotism: Hun Sen's Cambodia and the Return of Strict Authoritarianism," *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 12:1 (2019), 69-89.
- Watch in class: "Cambodia's election crackdown" (Al Jazeera 2018, 26 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NAjAG4KhUI>
- Watch in class: "Vietnam's Imperiled Bloggers" (Al-Jazeera, 10 minutes): <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/01/vietnam-battalions-cyber-armies-silencing-online-dissent-200116235037858.html>

III. ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS POLITICS

WEEK 8

Session 14 (Feb. 24): **Plural Societies and Muslim Identity Politics**

- Vincent Houben, "Southeast Asia and Islam," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588 (2003), 149-170.
- Robert Hefner, Introduction: Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia," in Hefner, ed. *The Politics of Multiculturalism* (Hawaii, 2001), 1-28.

Session 15 (Feb. 26): **Ethno-religious politics in Malaysia and Singapore**

- Robert Hefner, Introduction: Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia," in Hefner, ed. *The Politics of Multiculturalism* (Hawaii, 2001), 28-51.
- Sharmani Gabriel, "The Meaning of Race in Malaysia: Colonial, Post-Colonial, and Possible New Conjunctures," *Ethnicities* 15:6 (2015), 782-809.

WEEK 9

Session 16 (March 2): **Ethnic politics: Myanmar**

- Ardeth Thawngmung, "The Dilemmas of Burma's Multinational Society," in Jacques Bertrand and Andre Laliberte, eds. *Multination States in Asia: Accommodation or Resistance* (Cambridge, 2010), 136-163.
- Ardeth Thawngmung, "The Politics of Indigeneity in Myanmar: Competing Narratives on Rohingya in Rakhine State," *Asian Ethnicity* 17:4 (2016), 527-547.
- Watch in class: "Myanmar's Killing Fields," PBS Frontline 2018, 55 minutes: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/myanmars-killing-fields/>
- **Hard copy of TERM PAPER due in class and electronic version due on canvas by 2 pm**

Session 17 (March 4): **The State, Islam, and Women in Malaysia and Indonesia**

- Zainah Anwar, "What's Islam? Whose Islam? Sisters in Islam and the Struggle for Women's Rights," in Hefner, ed. *The Politics of Multiculturalism* (Hawaii, 2001), 227-252.
- Susan Blackburn, "Indonesian Women and Political Islam," in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (2008), 83-105.

WEEK 10

Session 18 (March 9): **Radical Islam and terrorism in SE Asia**

- Saiful Mujani and William Liddle, "Muslim Indonesia's Secular Democracy," *Asian Survey* 49:4 (2009), 575-590.
- Burhanuddin Muhtadi, "The Quest for Hizbut Tarir in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37 (2009), 623-645.
- Scott Atran, "The Emir: An Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Alleged Leader of the SE Asian Jemaah Islamiyah Organization," *Spotlight on Terror* 3: 9 (2005).
- Abdurrahman Wahid, "Right Islam vs. Wrong Islam: Muslims and non-Muslims must unite to defeat the Wahhabi ideology," *Wall Street Journal* (December 30, 2005).

- Watch in class: “Struggle for the Soul of Islam: Inside Indonesia” (PBS, 2007).

Session 19 (March 11): **Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Thailand’s & Philippines’ South**

- James Eder and Thomas McKenna, “Minorities in the Philippines: Ancestral Land and Autonomy in Theory and Practice,” in Christopher Duncan, ed. *Civilizing the Margins* (Cornell 2004), 56-85.
- Kathrin Rupprecht, “Separatist Conflict in ASEAN: Comparing Southern Thailand and Mindanao,” *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 7: 1 (2014), 21-40.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, March 19, at 2:45 pm

(covering political changes, democratization, and ethnic and religious politics)